

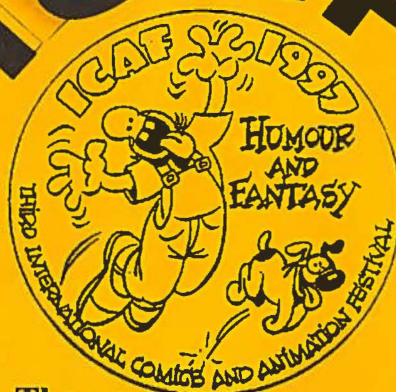
Georgetown University
Department of French



Ambassade de France
Service Culturel

present

ICAF



The
Third Annual

International Comics and Animation Festival

Le Festival International de la bande dessinée et du film d'animation

**Washington, DC and
Silver Spring, MD
September 18-20, 1997**

ICAF *wishes to thank...*

Tristan Fonlladosa, *without whom
this event would not have been possible*

Irene Brodetski
Christopher Oarr
Dr. Mary L. Radnofsky

At Georgetown University:

The Joseph E. McCarthy Fund

Dr. Jean-Max Guieu, Chair

The French Department

Dr. Deborah Lesko-Baker, Chair

The Department of East Asian Languages

Dr. Alan Tansman, Chair

The American Studies Program

Dr. Ronald Johnson, Director

L'Alliance Française de Washington

Barnes & Noble Georgetown

La Communauté Française de Belgique / CGRI

Histrio Théâtre

Pro Helvetia

Les Editions Vent d'Ouest

The Embassy of Belgium

The Embassy of Canada

The Embassy of Finland

The Embassy of Luxembourg

The Embassy of The Netherlands

The Embassy of Switzerland

ICAF



1997 Program

Dr. Guy Spielmann
Dept. of French
Georgetown University
Washington, DC 20057
(202) 687-5852
Fax (202) 687-7083

<http://www.georgetown.edu/spielmann/icaf.htm>
spielmag@gusun.georgetown.edu

Thursday September 18

Georgetown University Conference Center (202) 687-3200

2:00-2:50 Leavey Ballroom C

¶ The Comics Page: Form And Meaning in Comics Narrative Joseph "Rusty" Witek, Stetson University

Recent formalist analyses in English of comics narrative by Will Eisner, Scott McCloud, and Robert Harvey have begun to describe the mechanics of comics storytelling, including valuable discussions of the interactions between and within panels. Little attention, however, has been paid to the role of the largest single visual unit of comics, the page itself. As a beginning to a discussion of the role of the page, this paper will examine several ways that the overall page itself functions to control the ways comics are read and to create subtextual patterns which can reinforce or undercut the literal levels of the texts. Examples will be drawn from the works of R.F. Outcault, Winsor McCay, and Carl Barks.

¶ Blood Money: The Symbolic Economy of Sin City Jeffrey A. Miller, Utica College

Although McCloud intended *Understanding Comics* to "stimulate debate, not settle it," it has nonetheless become canonical. This is distressing because McCloud's theory of comics is predicated upon a representational theory of meaning; signs are merely likenesses in varying degrees of abstraction. Semiotics contends that signs neither contain intrinsic meaning nor refer naively to an a priori reality. Rather, meaning is dependent upon exchange; a sign is meaningful only by its having been chosen at the expense of its opposite term(s). This analysis of Frank Miller's (1994) *The Customer is Always Right* examines the role of three economies — systems of exchange — in the production of meaning: the economies of language, narration and money.

Thursday, September 18

Georgetown University Conference Center

3:00-3:50 Leavey Ballroom C

¶ “In Dreams I walk with you” : Fantasy, Folklore and Dark Humor in Neil Gaiman’s *Sandman* Series

Anne N. Thalheimer, University of Delaware

Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* series, most often described as fantasy, revolves around a set of seven siblings, known as The Endless. The Endless are not mortal and not gods, but rule over corresponding aspects of human life. Through these characters (in order of age: Destiny, Destruction, Death, Dream, the twins Despair and Desire, and Delirium), Gaiman's central preoccupations — fantasy, folklore, and dark humor — are revealed. His narratives involving the Endless are often filled with literary allusions ranging from Shakespeare to classical mythology, emphasizing both Gaiman's interest in comic books as a legitimate artistic form and his preoccupations, rather than interrogating superheroism or solely reworking literary texts.

¶ Film Noir en Couleurs

Alan F. Farrell, Virginia Military Institute

Ambling out of the swirling mist, under dew-pearled streetlamps, up tenebrous, menacing alleys where lurks God-knows-what primal terror, French artist Sokal's trench-coated Inspecteur Canardo rescues Purloined Innocence in a demi-monde of 1940's detectives where the *good* are only marginally superior to the *bad*.

Thursday, September 18

Georgetown University Conference Center

4:30-6:30 Leavey Ballroom C

¶ Muscle, Mind, and Magic: a Cross-Cultural Look at Superman and Asterix

Pierre Verdaguer, University of Maryland

Asterix and Superman, different as their attributes and qualities may be, have a comparable status and play a similar role in their respective countries, France and the United States: they are both defenders and upholders of national values. In this sense, they can be seen as "national" heroes, who may be admired for their courage and achievements, but who essentially are to be regarded as ideals or models (Webster's definition). Clearly, both characters have enjoyed remarkable popularity since they were first introduced (Superman at the end of the 1930's, and Asterix at the end of the 1950's). The question is: why is it that these seemingly ethnocentric productions can be popular in their own countries and abroad?

¶ Thirteen Ways of Looking at European Comics

Mark Nevins (New York) and **Bart Beaty** (McGill)

This abundantly-illustrated, high-octane presentation provides a complete introduction to the contemporary European comics scene. A must-see for all serious comics aficionados (and all others as well!).

7:30 Barnes & Noble Georgetown 3040 M Street (202) 965-9880

Presentation and Book signing by **Patrick McDonnell** (*Mutts*) and **Frank Cho** (*Liberty Meadows*), followed by a reception offered by Barnes & Noble and ICAF.

Friday, September 19

Georgetown University Conference Center

8:30-900 **Breakfast** *Complimentary*

9:00-9:50 Leavey Ballroom EF

¶ Fantasy, Humor and the Didactic during the July Monarchy:
The Example of *Le Prince Coqueluche* (1846)

Robert Daniel, Saint Joseph's University

In this short didactic novel for children produced by Hetzel, the relation between text and illustration seems more dynamic than static, a style which clearly belongs to this innovative publisher. After examining several illustrated passages to give a sense of the novel's character, I will briefly evoke the publisher's later work, likewise didactic and exotic in tone (especially his publications of Jules Verne), which make him seem the great-grandfather – if not the grandfather – of many modern comics.

¶ The South in *Pogo*, *Kudzu* and *Shoe*
Dorothy Betz, Georgetown University

This South is not the hillbilly world of *Li'l Abner* or *Snuffy Smith* — this is the Coastal South, which has produced our alter egos in *Pogo*, *Kudzu* and *Shoe*. Pogo and his pals voyage through the events of their generation making pithy observations of the social and political scene from their flat-bottomed boat of many names. Beyond the universal elements of human nature that allow us to identify with the characters lie the specifics that define this Southern culture: a certain myopic self-centeredness, an addiction to weird food and other manifestations of dubious taste, and a general distrust of outsiders even in the person of home-grown politicians who have spent too much time in Washington. In each case, the Everyman figure at the center of the strip provides a crucial point of view. We can identify with him as a member of this society, but we are identifying with an observer with a capacity for judgment.

Friday, September 19

Georgetown University Conference Center

10:10-11:00 Leavey Ballroom EF

¶ Fred's *Philemon* : Fantasy or Reality Check ? **Cécile Danehy, Middlebury College**

In 1965, Fred created the elaborate, highly coherent albeit zany world of the Letters of ATLANTIC OCEAN, each letter an island with its flora, fauna and laws, and where non-sense and the absurd are the norm. Known to but a few humans, the existence of this world depends on Philemon believing in it. Combining humor and fantasy, Fred conveys to his readers a serious message on a lighthearted mode: this fantasy world is neither a substitute for nor an evasion from the normal world which may suck but that's the only one we have.

¶ Black, Blanc, Beur Humor **Mark McKinney, Miami University Ohio**

From early on, Farid Boudjellal has drawn comics that contest ostracizing social forces (e.g. racism, economic exploitation, men's oppression of women). In his work, humor destabilizes congealed binary categories, such as Arab/French and madness/sanity. I analyze Boudjellal's use of humor in works that span his career, from his early strips, to his collaborative work in an independent studio, then in his own four-volume "Juif-Arabe" series, and in his most recent book, *Le Beurgeois*. A centering tendency is discernable both within individual series and as a general process across Boudjellal's published body of comics.

11:10-12:00 Leavey Ballroom EF

Michèle Laframboise (Québec), Author of *Pianissimo*

12:00-2:00 **Lunch**

A Complimentary gourmet boxed lunch will be provided to conference participants.

Friday, September 19

Georgetown University Conference Center

2:00-3:00 Leavey Ballroom EF

¶ Arrêter cette bande dessinée? The Irony of Jacques Tardi **Anke Gilleir, University of Leuven/Louvain**

Jacques Tardi's series "Les aventures extraordinaires d'Adèle Blanc-Sec" constitutes in several ways a remarkable part of his entire work, not only because it started in 1976 and still continues today, but also because (apart from his very first work) it is his own scenario. A rhetorical analysis moreover reveals that his series contains a sense of irony that questions the existence of fiction vis à vis the destructive impact of reality, symbolically represented by the Great War. The existential self-questioning of the text leads to a hyperbolic sense of absurdity and complexity in the plot — an extreme consequence of the segregation of reality and fiction.

¶ Nested Dreams : Variations on Frank Lloyd Wright's Name and Work in Andreas's *Le Triangle rouge* **Yves Lacroix, Université du Québec à Montréal**

Although they are masterpieces of narrative, Andreas's works are often hermetic and their stories deceptive; this is well illustrated in *Le Triangle rouge* (1995), a text that contains five minimal stories narrated in an anachronic and repetitive fashion. This exaggerated fragmentation of the narrative continuity liberates a strongly serial structure. The order of the stories, the redundancy of forms, and the distribution of motifs, however, outline virtual episodes of a fantastical and obsessed quest whose conclusion is not clear. To elucidate matters, four ways of reading proposed by the text are followed : the oniric structure, the numbering of narratives, a reference to Frank Lloyd Wright, and a play on pictograms. It finally emerges that, in the form of a tribute to the famous American architect, *Le Triangle rouge* proposes a meditation, or at least a reverie, on the creator's vital relationship to his creation and his creature. The pleasure here is above all in the reading, in the decoding of what was the author's pleasure to encode.

¶ When Collaborators Don't Collaborate: Cartoons vs. Text in *The Modern Rake's Progress* (1934) **Margaret D. Stetz, Georgetown University**

If the cartoonist is not also the supplier of the written text, what happens in a collaborative project in which the contributors' perspectives differ? Does the visual dominate the verbal, or vice versa? And how does such a split affect the reception of the work? Does the consumer of the artifact become viewer first, then reader, and maintain both spectatorial positions equally, or allow one to supersede the other? And what kind of laughter is possible, under such circumstances? These questions will be taken up in the specific context of *The Modern Rake's Progress* (1934), a work of social satire that appeared first in *Nash's Pall Mall Magazine* (London), then in book form. Its visual component was created by David Low (1891-1963), the most prominent political cartoonist and caricaturist in England from the 1930s-1950s. Its text was supplied afterwards by Rebecca West (1892-1983), the distinguished novelist and essayist, who supported feminist and socialist causes.

Friday, September 19

Georgetown University Conference Center

3:15-4:00 Leavey Ballroom EF

Farid Boudjellal (France), author of the *Juif Arabe* series and *Le Beurgeois*

4:10-5:00 Leavey Ballroom EF

Lucien Cszuga and **Roger Leiner** (Luxembourg), authors of *De Super Jhemp*

5:15-6:00 Leavey Ballroom EF

Karoline Schreiber (Switzerland), author of *Die Reise, Fiat Lux*

7:00 - Alliance Française 2142 Wyoming Ave., N.W. (202) 234-7911

Book signing reception with invited artists

Histrio Théâtre will give a performance based on Florence Cestac's *Le Démon de midi*, directed by Geneviève Brunet-Smith.

Saturday, September 20

Quality Hotel Silver Spring 8727 Colesville Rd. Silver Spring, Maryland.
(301) 589-5200 / (800) 376-7666

9:00-9:50 Assembly Room

¶ Material Extension and the Racial Self in Herriman's *Krazy Kat*

Eyal Amiran, Michigan State University

Krazy Kat performs George Herriman's ambivalence about race and explores the ways in which the materiality of the comic art, its use of ink and space and contrast, necessarily enact a drama about racial identity, so that an artist who publishes in the medium daily becomes the subject of the work in race or color terms as well as in the more usual Barthesian way. Herriman, whose family moved from New Orleans to L.A., is listed in his birth certificate as "colored," but passed for white. He was always aware of his "mixed" heritage and almost always wore a hat to conceal his curly hair. In *Krazy Kat* extensions of the body generally dramatize race. Hair and color, for instance, are liminal quality of the materiality of one's being. Like "race" itself, they are and are not a part of the self. In *Krazy Kat* there is an unconscious discussion of these material extensions of the self — fingernails, shadows, hair — as indexes, in the context of the comic's general preoccupations, of the ambivalent place of race in self-definition and in the comic existence of the self. These manifestations of a racial crisis in Herriman are enabled by the comic excess of fantasy and appear, under this pressure, where more conventional or genre-bound work might conceal them.

¶ F. Scott Fitzgerald in the Funny Papers: The Commentary of Mickey Mouse and Charlie Brown.

M. Thomas Inge, Randolph-Macon College

Few major American writers have figured so prominently in American popular culture as has F. Scott Fitzgerald. he was so successful at self-promotion in his own lifetime that any efforts since then to evoke the Jazz Age or the Roaring Twenties is inevitably accompanied by a photograph of or a reference to Fitzgerald. Even the comic strip, that reflector of American values, the literature of the common and the uncommon folk alike, has used references to the author and his fiction. An examination of such references to Fitzgerald and his work, especially *The Great Gatsby*, in such comics as Al Capp's *Li'l Abner*, Bill Griffith's *Zippy*, Charles Schultz' *Peanuts* and Tom Hachtman's *Gertrude's Follies*, as well as *Mad* magazine and *Mickey Mouse* comic books, suggest that a satirical tension exists between literature and comic art which produces commentary on the status of the author in American culture. They are acknowledgments of Fitzgerald, not just as an icon of a period in the nation's history, but as a continuing influential force in the products of the American imagination.

Saturday, September 20

Quality Hotel Silver Spring

10:10-11:00 Assembly Room

¶ Fantasy and Humor in Asian Comic Books

John A. Lent, Temple University

Asian comic books, whether they go by the names of *manga* (Japan), *komiks* or *manwha* (Korea), are found in every country, sometimes imitative of American or Japanese prototypes, sometimes rather unique to the locale in which they are published. In some places, such as Japan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, they represent large industries with gigantic readerships, while in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, they struggle to stay alive. Fantasy and humor obviously play important roles in these comic books. In countries such as Myanmar, Thailand and Malaysia, humor is the main ingredient of the books; in all countries, there is a segment of the comic book industry reserved for humor. Fantasy, in the form of science-fiction, supernatural, or the fantastic, is ubiquitous as well; in the Philippines, *komiks* have centered around all types of unusual creatures — for instance, a pair of chopped-off hands with human qualities, “Bulko” (similar to the Hulk). This presentation will discuss the format and styles of the books, the nature of humor and fantasy as reflected in them, the creative process and some demographics of the industry.

¶ X/1999 as Fantasy *Shojo Manga*.

Randall Clark, Pfeiffer College

One major subgenre of Japanese comic books is the *Shojo Manga*, or girls' comic. Because they are aimed at female readers, these comics are often written and drawn by women and feature female characters. *X/1999* is a new *Shojo Manga* produced by four female writers and artists who work collectively under the pseudonym Clamp. Clamp's approach to *Shojo Manga* has been somewhat innovative while working with the conventions of the genre: an emphasis on the fantastic and the supernatural juxtaposed against a realistic setting; a powerful yet vulnerable female protagonist, and a strong and mysterious male protagonist. This paper will examine *X/1999* as a fantasy work aimed at young women. It will also explore the differences between this work and other *Shojo Manga* and briefly discuss Clamp's other work.

Saturday, September 20

Quality Hotel Silver Spring

10-12:10 Assembly Room

Florence Cestac (France), author of *Harry Mickson*, *Les Déblok* and *Le Démon de midi*, Alph' Art d'Humour (Grand Prize for Humor) at the 1997 Festival d'Angoulême

and

Jean-Marc Rochette (France), author of *Le Transperce-Neige* and *Edmond le cochon*

12:10-1:30 **Lunch**

1:30-2:20 Assembly Room

Tome (Belgium), scriptwriter for *Le Petit Spirou* and *Sur la route de Selma*

2:30-3:30 Assembly Room

A Panel with **Patrick McDonnell** and **Frank Cho**
Moderated by comics scholar and reviewer **Charles Hatfield**
(University of Connecticut)

An informal conversation on the art of the newspaper strip, and its relation to the world of comic books, with two cartoonists who have entered the syndicated strip field in the '90s: Frank Cho, creator of *Liberty Meadows* (Creators Syndicate, since 1997) and the self-published volume *University 2* (1996), and Patrick McDonnell, creator of *Mutts* (King Features, since 1994), syndicated in over 400 newspapers worldwide and now in its second collected volume, *Cats and Dogs*, hot off the press from Andrews & McMeel.

Saturday, September 20

Quality Hotel Silver Spring

3:45-4:20 Assembly Room

¶ “Our Dreams Are Tales”: Female Comics Artists Reveal Their Sleeping Stories

K. A. Laity, University of Connecticut

Comics may be the perfect medium for conveying the eccentricities of the dream state, as the tradition stretching from Winsor McKay's *Rarebit Fiends* to Rick Veitch's demonstrates. Female comics artists' dreams often show the tense relationship between creation and procreation, as well as the impact of female sexuality within an artform still largely the province of male creators and readers. Julie Doucet's *Regret* finds her coping with a surprise sex-change; Mary Fleener's *My Favorite Dream* of 1991 portrays both herself and fellow artist Carol Tyler as vegetables escaping from a garden of comics characters and creators; and Dame Darcy's *The Nightmare* has her battling a relentless fetus. Though presented as documentaries of the dream-state, these comics disclose much more.

¶ On the Shoulders of Giants (And Superheroes, and Funny Animals): Comic Book Fantasy as a Narrative Building Block in the Work of Chris Ware

Gene Kannenberg, University of Connecticut

Chris Ware's comics blend form and theme in remarkable fashion, displaying an awareness of — and an (often ironic) appreciation for — comics history: characters reflect such American comics mainstays as superheroes, cowboys, and funny animals; layouts recall the work of earlier cartoonists; and book design resembles the pre-comic book pulps. The narrative content, however, focuses on subjects like world-weary loners or dysfunctional family dynamics. This synergy between text, image, and theme reveals the ability of comics to create complex, insightful narratives (in a traditional sense) out of the very material often used to condemn “funnybooks”: the trappings of fantasy.

4:30-5:15 Assembly Room

Gerrit de Jager (The Netherlands), author of *De Familie Doorzon*

The
Third Annual
**International Comics
and Animation Festival**

Le Festival International de la bande dessinée et du film d'animation

Dr. Guy Spielmann, Chair

Florence Cestac (France)

Alph' Art d'Humour (Grand Prize for Humor)
at the 1997 Festival d'Angoulême

Farid Boudjellal (France)

Lucien Czuga and Roger Leiner (Luxembourg)

Gerrit de Jager (The Netherlands) **Michèle Laframboise** (Québec)

Patrick McDonnell (USA) **Jean-Marc Rochette** (France)

Karoline Schreiber (Switzerland) **Tome** (Belgium)
and **Frank Cho** (USA)

Papers by:

Eyal Amiran (Michigan State)

Dorothy Betz (Georgetown)

Randall Clark (Pfeiffer College)

Cécile Danehy (Middlebury College)

Robert Daniel (Saint Joseph's)

Alan Farrell (Virginia Military
Institute)

Anke Gilleir (Leuven)

M. Thomas Inge (Randolph-Macon
College)

Gene Kannenberg, Jr. (Connecticut)

Yves Lacroix (Québec à Montréal)

K. A. Laity (Connecticut)

John A. Lent (Temple)

Mark McKinney (Miami U. of
Ohio)

Jeffrey A. Miller (Utica College)

Mark Nevins (New York)

& **Bart Beaty** (McGill)

Margaret Stetz (Georgetown)

Anne Thalheimer (Delaware)

Pierre Verdaguer (Maryland)

Joseph "Rusty" Witek (Stetson)

Special thanks to:

Charles Hatfield

Ronan Lancelot

**This program was made with
Macromedia Freehand Graphics Studio 7
on a Power Macintosh**